

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 02345 301942Z
ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 L-03 H-02 DHA-02 /018 W
-----301949Z 062771 /44

P 301025Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4688

UNCLAS LA PAZ 2345

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC, BL
SUBJ: AMERICAN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA

REF: (A) LA PAZ 2268, (B) AMBASSADOR STEDMAN/PACE TELECON
OF MARCH 30.

1. DCM CALLED MARCH 30 ON SUB-SECRETARY OF JUSTICE LUIS
BALLIVIAN WHO WAS SWORN IN TO OFFICE MARCH 29. BALLIVIAN
WAS GENERALLY FAMILIAR WITH THE PRISONER PROBLEM BUT
NOT AWARE OF THE CURRENT STATUS OF CASES AND THE U.S.
INTEREST IN MOVING FORWARD AS FAST AS POSSIBLE WITH ALL
CASES BUT PARTICULARLY THOSE IN WHICH PRISONERS HAVE
BEEN DETAINED FOR LONG PERIODS OR IN WHICH EVIDENCE IS WEAK
OR OFFENSE APPEARS TO BE MINOR. DCM DESCRIBED PRESENT
SITUATION AT LENGTH INCLUDING MEASURES WHICH EMBASSY
IS TAKING TO MOVE HEARINGS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

2. BALLIVIAN SAID IN HIS PERSONAL OPINION THE DELAYS
IN CARRYING OUT THE TRIALS WERE DEPLORABLE. HE SAID
THE GOB MUST AND WAS TAKING STEPS TO SEE THAT JUSTICE
WAS, IN GENERAL, ACCELERATED AND HE RECOGNIZED THAT THE
NARCOTICS CASES, U.S. AND OTHER, MUST BE SINGLED OUT
FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION. DCM INQUIRED WHETHER HE WAS
FAMILIAR WITH THE PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF ADDITIONAL
JUDGES AND IF THERE WERE ANY DEVELOPMENTS ON THIS
TOPIC. BALLIVIAN SAID THAT ALTHOUGH THIS MIGHT
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SOUNDD FRIVOLOUS, SPACE WAS A REAL AND A MAJOR
PROBLEM IN LA PAZ. HOWEVER, HE WAS VISITING MARCH 30
OR 31 WITH THE DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF ENGINEERING WHICH
OCCUPIES A BUILDING OPPOSITE THE CENTRAL COURT BUILDING
AND IN WHICH HE THOUGHT SPACE COULD BE OBTAINED
VERY SOON. ASIDE FROM THIS POSSIBLE SOLUTION, THE
MINISTRY'S SEARCH FOR TEMPORARY SPACE WOULD

CONTINUE.

3. DCM ALSO POINTED OUT CURRENT PROBLEM IN WOMEN'S PRISON WHERE INMATES UNTIL RECENTLY HAD PRIVILEGE OF PREPARING SNACKS IN THE KITCHEN OR IN THEIR ROOMS. THIS PRIVILEGE HAD BEEN CUT OFF APPARENTLY BECAUSE TOO MUCH ELECTRICITY WAS BEING USED. THE CONSUL HAD RECEIVED COMPLAINTS ABOUT THIS ON MARCH 28 AND IT WAS ALSO MENTIONED IN REFERENCE B. BALLIVIAN SAID HE FOUND THIS HARD TO BELIEVE ESPECIALLY SINCE, AS DCM MENTIONED, THE INMATES OF THE MEN'S PRISON DID HAVE THIS PRIVILEGE. BALLIVIAN WOULD LOOK INTO THIS IMMEDIATELY.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE OVERALL PROBLEM, BALLIVIAN SAID HE WAS FULLY IN SYMPATHY WITH THE U.S. BAND EMBASSY CONCERN OVER THE DELAY IN TRIALS AND THAT WE COULD COUNT ON HIS COOPERATION. HE FULLY APPROVED OF THE STEPS THE EMBASSY WAS TAKING AND URGED THAT DCM CONTACT HIM AS SPECIFIC PROBLEMS AROSE. DURING CONVERSATION DCM REPEATEDLY EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF MOVING FORWARD QUICKLY AND GETTING AT LEAST SOME CASES RESOLVED IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

STEDMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRISONERS WELFARE, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 30-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LAPAZ02345
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770109-0389
Format: TEL
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977037/aaaaafzw.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a3d8bab9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SCSE
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 LA PAZ 2268
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3140253
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMERICAN PRISONERS IN BOLIVIA
TAGS: CASC, BL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a3d8bab9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009